

I would like to thank Transportation Committee Chairs Senator Haskell and Representative Lemar, Environment Committee Chairs Senator Cohen and Representative Gresko, and distinguished members of both committees for the opportunity to submit written testimony *in support of SB-4: An Act Concerning the Connecticut Clean Air Act with amendments*.

I am an urban planner and faculty member at the University of Connecticut in the Urban and Community Studies program, where I teach undergraduate courses on sustainable, equitable development and where my research focuses on economic justice and growth. It is with these goals and my undergraduate students in mind that I write *in support of the bill*, specifically the parts of the bill that add electric bicycles to the CHEAPR program.

E bike use greatly improves urban sustainability by lowering emissions

- Research increasingly shows e bikes reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMTs) and support mode switch away from cars in both urban and rural areas. Both are critical for improving air quality. E bike usage reduces particulate matter from vehicle tires. Low electricity use also means e bikes draw comparatively less power from our grid, reducing source pollution on a per-mile basis when compared to all automobiles.

E bike use also supports economic justice by providing personal mobility without excessive yearly costs and debt

- E bikes improve mobility by extending bikeable mileage range, allowing residents without cars access to jobs and essential services that might otherwise be inaccessible.
- E bikes provide this mobility at low cost and low debt. The thousands per year required for car payments, maintenance, and insurance make automobiles an investment many in Connecticut can't make. Research also links vehicle purchase and debt.

Finally (and personally): it's my hope that e bike subsidies help UConn students remain in state

- Each year hundreds of brilliant, funny, and driven UConn undergraduates sit in my classrooms. Too many leave upon graduation—a post-UConn “brain drain.” Many head to vibrant, dense, diverse cities where they can get around without a car—any visit to Storrs shows how students increasingly embrace all forms of e mobility.
- Communities across the state are devoting resources towards building the communities students like mine want. But housing costs and student debt remain high, and it remains difficult to navigate our existing transportation infrastructure without a costly car.
- E bikes are a much-needed part of the strategy we need to keep graduates in state. The legislature must do its part and assist municipalities by subsidizing e bike purchases.

To improve the legislation's abilities to meet these goals I also request (1) *the e bike cap be raised to at least \$4,000 to cover e cargo bikes*, which we increasingly recognize are utilized by women, (2) *subsidies for low-income residents or residents of EJ communities be raised*, and (3) *greater e bike representation on the CHEAPR board*.

Mary Donegan, MRP, PhD, West Hartford CT

Assistant Professor-in-Residence, Urban & Community Studies, University of Connecticut
Sustainable Global Cities Initiative, Faculty Affiliate, University of Connecticut
Research Affiliate, W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research